

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Program Guidelines manual is to provide local project sponsors with a complete description of the federal and state programs available for financing local public transportation related facilities. Each program is discussed in detail and addresses such topics as: project eligibility, project selection process, funding levels, key decision makers, significant dates, relevant statutory references and related publications.

With the 1997 state enactment of Senate Bill 45 (SB 45) and the enactment of the 1998 federal “Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century” (TEA-21), new programs and increased funding levels have become available for local transportation projects.

Exhibit 1-A illustrates the various federal and state programs available for financing local transportation projects and the typical annual funding level for each of the programs. Note that state program funding levels are subject to inclusion in the annual state budget approved by the Governor.

Exhibit 1-B lists the various federal and state programs available for financing local transportation projects and includes a brief discussion of the programs and the eligible uses of the funds.

1.2 BACKGROUND

On September 12, 1997, the Governor signed SB 45, making substantial changes in the State’s transportation programming process.

SB 45 was enacted with the following basic objectives:

(SB 45 amended, added, and repealed sections 14523-55 and 65071-86 of the Governmental Code, 99310-18 of the Public Utilities Code, and 163-7, 188, 199 and 2600-02 of the Streets and Highways Code.)

1. Preserve the basic planning and programming process, avoid legislative budgeting of projects, while changing the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) from a project delivery document to a resource management document.
2. Transfer transportation decision-making responsibility to those who are closest to the problem.
3. Eliminate artificial constraints and barriers to programming.
4. Place state highways, local roads and transit projects on equal footing for access to support costs.
5. Recognize the Caltrans role as owner-operator of the State Highway System, while removing Caltrans from lead responsibility for resolving urban congestion problems created largely by local decisions.
6. Provide incentives for regional accountability for the timely use of funds.
7. Retain the California Transportation Commission (CTC) role as guardian of state capital dollars, with responsibility for determining how best to manage those dollars in a wise and cost-effective manner.

On June 9, 1998, the President signed TEA-21 authorizing highway, highway safety, and other surface transportation programs for the next six years which significantly increased federal funding authorizations for state and local highways, and mass transportation. Federal funds allocated to California and available for state, local, and mass transportation projects have increased to approximately \$2.5 billion annually.

The types of projects and activities now eligible for federal funding provide state and local governments with unprecedented flexibility in developing a mix of highway, transit and other alternatives to address statewide, regional and local transportation needs.

The Commission intends to carry out these objectives through its guidelines, stressing accountability and flexibility.

1.3 ROLES OF THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL AGENCIES

Cities, counties, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs), and other authorities work independently as well as with Caltrans in the development of long and short range improvement plans. The role of local communities in the design of transportation improvement programs and selection of projects has continued to expand through the enactment of ISTEA, TEA-21, and SB 45. Transportation planning begins at the city and county level with the inclusion in their “General Plan” of a transportation (circulation) element. The key in local decisions is land use issues. The transportation elements developed in a local General Plan are incorporated along with air, water, congestion and environmental concerns into planning and programming documents developed by RTPAs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Exhibit 1-C, MPO RTPA Map,” is a map showing the location of MPOs and RTPAs in the state.

Transportation planning begins at the city and county level with the inclusion of a transportation element in a local “General Plan.” The transportation elements developed in a General Plan are incorporated along with other concerns into planning and programming documents that RTPAs and MPOs develop.

Various local agency specialty plans (e.g. air, water, land use, and congestion) influence and are incorporated (as needed) into the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). An RTP is a 20 year transportation plan that describes policies, strategies, and needs. An RTP presents the local area’s vision for local multimodal transportation systems. RTPs are required by state and federal law. Caltrans cooperates in the development of the regional documents by providing expertise and information. RTPs must be consistent with FHWA and FTA planning regulations. These regulations impose conditions for receiving federal-aid funds that require each urbanized area to have a continuing, comprehensive and coordinated transportation planning process that results in RTPs and Federal Transportation Improvement Programs consistent with planned development of the area.

Key documents in transportation planning and programming are defined below. Also shown are an outline of roles and a flowchart overview of the planning and programming process. For more details, go to the Transportation Programming website at: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/.

RTIP: The Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) is the RTPA’s share of the state STIP and must be consistent with the RTP. Updated every two years, the RTIP is a five-year program identifying projects based on funding availability from the STIP fund estimate. Upon adoption by the RTPA, the RTIP is submitted to Caltrans for approval and incorporation into the STIP.

STIP: The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a five-year capital improvement program of transportation projects, on and off the State Highway System, funded with revenues from the State Highway Account as well as other funding sources.

FTIP: Each of California’s 16 MPOs prepares a Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) that includes a three-year priority list of highway and transit projects that are federally funded or are of regional significance. FTIPs also include federally funded capital improvements to the regions’ transit systems along with associated federal operating assistance programs.

FSTIP: Prepared by Caltrans in cooperation with the MPOs and RTPAs, the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP) is a three-year statewide intermodal transportation program that contains all projects in California that are federally funded or regionally significant.

Local — Cities, Counties & Other Agencies:

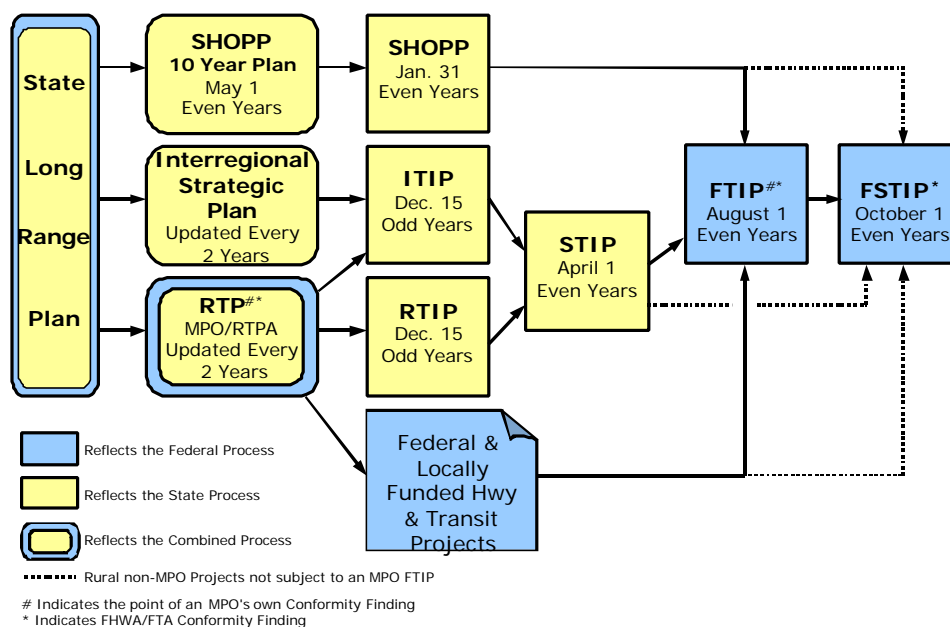
- Cities and counties set land-use policy and nominate transportation projects for funding by the RTPA.
- Transit agencies, such as Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency (LACMTA), nominate projects for funding and deliver transportation services and improvements.
- Environmental agencies at the local, state, and federal level review transportation projects and issue permits to ensure transportation improvements comply with environmental law.

Regional — Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

- Currently there are 16 MPOs in California.
- Prepares the 20-year Regional Transportation Plan and selects projects.
- The Governor designates an MPO in every urbanized area with a population over 50,000.
- Federally required planning bodies; typically the same as an urban region's RTPA.

Regional — Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA)

- Includes 48 agencies formed by special legislation, council/association of governments, and local transportation commissions.
- Administers state funds and allocates federal and local funds to projects.
- Selects projects for the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) in the STIP.

Process Flowchart**FEDERAL/STATE PLANNING & PROGRAMMING PROCESS**Transportation Programming
September 2000For more information, go to the Transportation Programming website at: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/.

1.4 FEDERAL PROGRAMS

The three major funding categories for local assistance projects are: the National Highway System (NHS), the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ).

NHS funds, typically restricted to projects located on the NHS, are programmed for local projects through the STIP. See Exhibit 3-A, “California Local Routes on the National Highway System” in this manual for a complete listing of local routes on the NHS.

STP funds may be used on any public road except those functionally classified as local roads or minor collectors. These roads are collectively referred to as federal-aid roads (or highways). The exception to the functional classification criteria is that bridge, safety, carpool related, and bicycle/pedestrian projects may be located on any road. TEA-21 allows a portion of the STP funds for rural areas to be used on rural minor collectors (see Chapter 4, “STP,” in this manual).

The CMAQ program provides a flexible funding source for transportation projects and programs that help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act. Eligible activities include transit improvements, travel demand management strategies, traffic flow improvements, and fleet conversions to cleaner fuels, among others. Funding is available for areas that do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (nonattainment area), as well as former nonattainment areas that are now in compliance (maintenance areas) (see Chapter 5, “CMAQ,” in this manual).

Other funding categories for local assistance projects are described below.

The Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation (HBRR) program provides federal funds for bridge work on and off federal-aid highways. The purpose of this program is to help fund major reconstruction and replacement bridge projects (see Chapter 6, “HBRR,” in this manual).

Ten percent of the STP apportionment authorized by TEA-21 is reserved for Safety Programs: Hazard Elimination Safety (HES) and Railroad-Highway Crossing Improvements (see Chapter 9, “HES,” Chapter 10, “Railroad Crossing Improvements,” and Chapter 24, “Safe Routes to School Program” in this manual).

Another ten percent of the STP apportionment is reserved for Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA). This reservation is used for projects directly related to surface transportation that are over and above normal and mitigation work, and are within the twelve categories in federal statute (see Chapter 8, “TEA,” in this manual).

Emergency Relief funds are used for the reconstruction of roads, streets, and bridges on federal-aid highways that are damaged by floods, earthquakes, hurricanes or other catastrophes. These funds become available when the damage is extensive and an emergency is formally declared by the Governor and approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (see Chapter 11, “Disaster Assistance,” in this manual).

Minor federal programs, including the Public Lands Highways, Scenic Byways, Defense Access Roads, High Priority Projects (name changed under TEA-21 from Demonstration projects) and Discretionary Bridge programs are discussed in Chapter 12, “Other Federal Programs,” in this manual.

1.5 STATE PROGRAMS

SB 45 terminated three state funded local assistance programs:

- State & Local Transportation Partnership Program (SLTPP or Partnership Program)
- Flexible Congestion Relief (FCR)
- Traffic System Management Program (TSM)

State funds that were available for local agencies under SLTPP, FCR and TSM are now available for local agencies under the STIP program. Also, old state STIP funds and new TEA-21 funds allocated to the state are available for local agencies. Locally sponsored transportation projects receiving STIP funding may receive either state funds, or federal funds with a state funded match.

Article XIX of the California Constitution permits the use of state revenues in the State Highway Account (SHA) only for state highways, local roads and fixed guideway facilities. This means, for example, that rail rolling stock and buses may be funded only from the federal revenues in the SHA. For such projects, the non-federal match will have to be provided from a non-STIP source (see Chapter 23, “Local Agency STIP Projects” in this manual).

Other state programs available for locally sponsored transportation projects include:

- Optional Exchange and State Match Program
- Highway-Railroad Grade Separation Program
- Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program
- Bicycle Transportation Account
- Proposition 116 Improvements
- Petroleum Violation Escrow Account

The Optional Exchange program provides for qualifying RTPAs and counties to exchange their annual apportionment of Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds and regional Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) funds for state cash. The State Match program provides state funds to match federal RSTP funds. Exchange and Match funds are not tied to federal requirements, but instead must comply with Article XIX of the State Constitution (see Chapter 8, “Transportation Enhancement Activities” and Chapter 18, “Optional Federal Exchange and State Match Programs,” in this manual).

The Grade Separation Program provides state funds for the: 1) construction, reconstruction and alteration of grade separations to eliminate proposed or existing grade crossings, and 2) the removal or relocation of highways or railroad tracks to eliminate grade crossings (see Chapter 19, “Grade Separation,” in this manual).

The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) program provides state funds for the transportation project to mitigate the environmental impacts of new or modified public transportation projects above and beyond that required by the environmental document (see Chapter 20, “EEM,” in this manual).

The Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) provides funds to cities and counties for projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters (see Chapter 21, “Bicycle Transportation Account,” in this manual).

The Petroleum Violation Escrow Account (PVEA) provides funds for projects which save or reduce energy (see Chapter 22, “Other State Programs,” of this manual).

The Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) program provides funds to local governmental agencies based on the results of a statewide competition that requires submission of proposals for funding and rates those proposals on all of the following factors:

1. Demonstrated needs of the applicant.
2. Potential of the proposal for reducing child injuries and fatalities.
3. Potential of the proposal for encouraging increased walking and bicycling among students.
4. Identification of safety hazards.
5. Identification of current and potential walking and bicycling routes to school.
6. Consultation and support for projects by school-based associations, local traffic engineers, local elected officials, law enforcement agencies, and school officials."

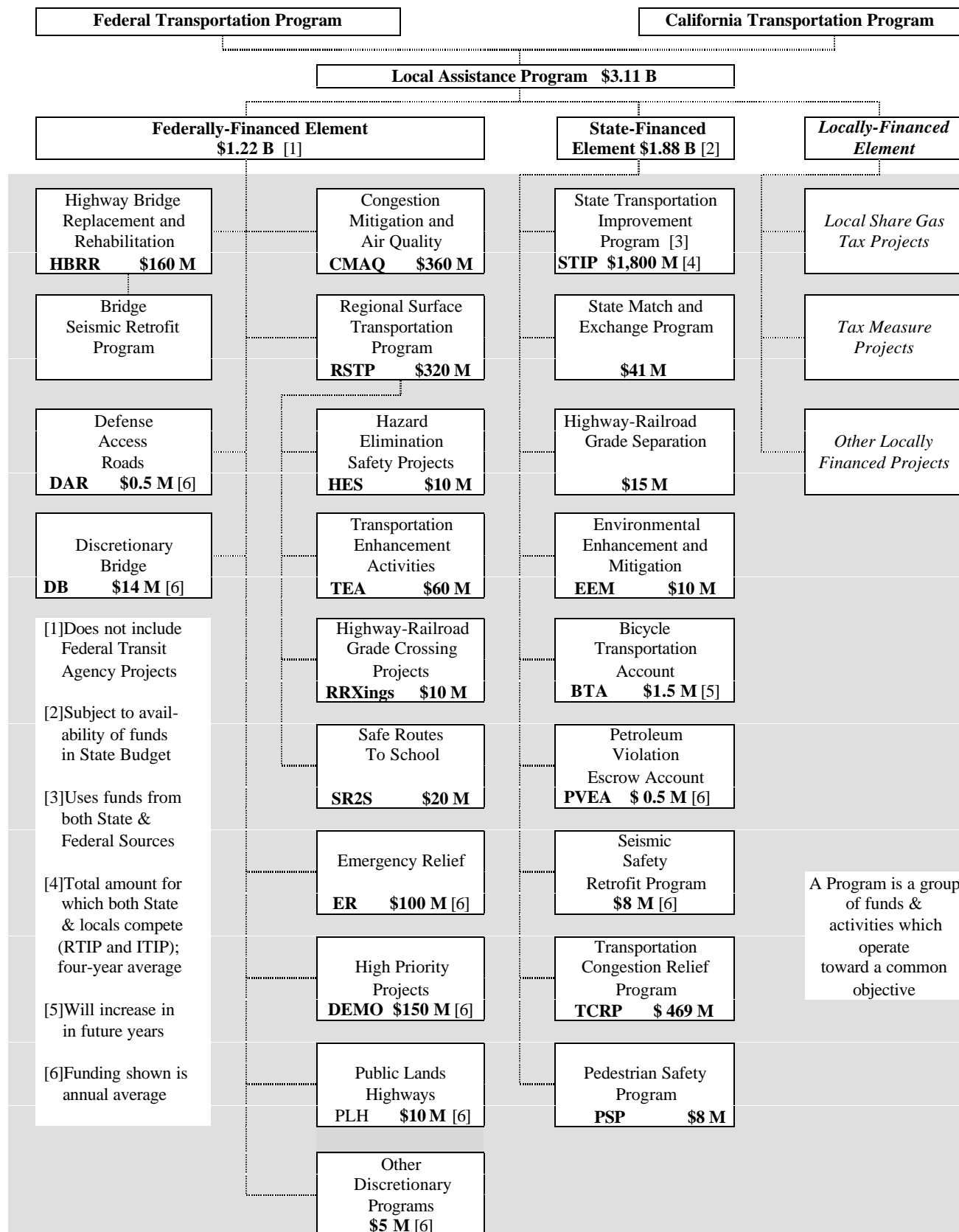
(See Chapter 24, "Safe Routes to School Program," of this manual.)

For further information about both federal and state programs contact the District Local Assistance Engineer (DLAE) for your area shown in Exhibit 1-D.

1.6 REFERENCES

- "A Summary – Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century" Publication No. FHWA-PL-98-038, HPP-20/8-98(15M)E.
- California Transportation Commission – "1998 STIP Interim Guidelines," Amended (September 29, 1999) CTC Resolution G-99-03
- "Statutes Relating to the Programming and Funding of Transportation Projects," 1999, State of California, Department of Transportation, Division of Transportation Programming

EXHIBIT 1-A STATE & FEDERAL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS



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EXHIBIT 1-B LOCAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Chapter	Program	Eligible Uses of Funds
4	Surface Transportation Program (STP)	Broad variety of transit and highway (includes streets and roads) projects
5	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)	Projects which contribute towards attainment of Clean Air Act requirements
6	Highway Bridge Replacement & Rehabilitation (HBRR)	Bridge replacement, rehabilitation, painting, and bridge rail replacement
7	Seismic Safety Retrofit	Remedy structural seismic design deficiencies of public bridges
8	Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA)	Projects that enhance quality-of-life, in or around transportation facilities
9	Hazard Elimination Safety (HES)	Safety improvement projects on all public roadways
10	Railroad/Highway At-Grade Crossing	Eliminating hazards to vehicles and pedestrians at existing railroad crossings
11	Disaster Assistance (Emergency Relief)	Repair and restoration of damaged transportation facilities after a disaster
12.1	High Priority Projects	Projects initiated by Congress at the request of constituents
12.2	Public Lands Highways (PLH)	Projects that are within, adjacent to, or provide access to public land
12.3	Scenic Byways	Planning and enhancement funds provided for scenic byways
12.4	Discretionary Bridge	Program on hold - recommend using HBRR funds
12.5	Defense Access Roads (DAR)	Federal government program to mitigate defense installations and activities
14	Flexible Congestion Relief (FCR)	No new funding is available through this program
15	State/Local Transportation Partnership Program (STLPP)	No new funding is available through this program
16	Traffic Systems Management (TSM)	No new funding is available through this program
17	TSM Match	No new funding is available through this program
18	Optional Federal Exchange and State Match Programs	Exchanging local STP & TEA funds for state \$ & providing state \$ to locals
19	Grade Separation	Eliminating highway-rail crossing at grade with a grade separation
20	Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM)	Mitigate the environmental impacts of new or modified transportation facilities
21	Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA)	For bicycle bikeways and related facilities, planning, safety and education
22.1	Petroleum Violation Escrow Account (PVEA)	Projects that save or reduce energy
23	State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)	Any transportation project that is approved by the RTPAs/MPOs and accepted by the CTC
24	Safe Routes to School (SR2S)	Pedestrian/bicycle school safety projects on all roadways
25	Traffic Congestion Relief Plan (TCRP)	Projects that relieve congestion, provide for the safe and efficient movement of goods, and provide inter-modal connectivity of transportation systems throughout California

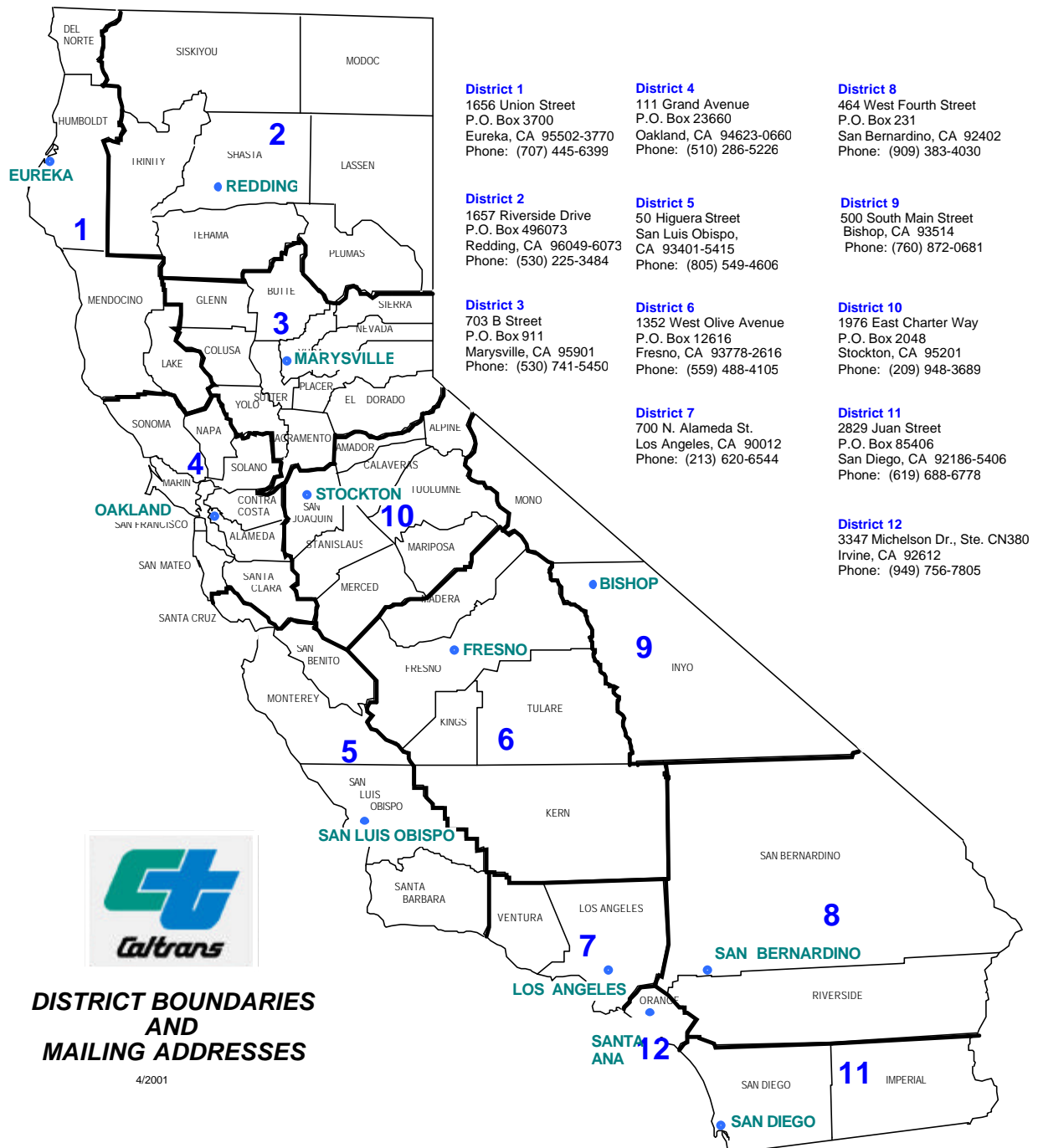
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EXHIBIT 1-C MPO AND RTPA MAP



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EXHIBIT 1-D DISTRICT LOCAL ASSISTANCE OFFICES



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